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FARMING TO MEET THE DEFENSE CHALLENGE --No. 2

Broadcast Wednesday, June 11, 1941, by 16 AAA State Committeemen in the Department of Agriculture portion of the National Farm and Home Hour over the NBC Blue Network. Second of three broadcasts presented by farmer-committee from all 48 States attending National AAA Conference in Washington, D. C.

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KADDERLY:

And from Washington, farmers from all over the United States report to you on "Farming to Meet the Defense Challenge." This is the second of three groups of reports being made by State Triple-A Committeemen who are in the nation's capital this week representing the farmers of the 48 States at a national conference, preparing the Triple-A Farm Program for 1942.

Our first report today comes from the Corn Belt State of Illinois. I'll ask Harry M. Combrink to tell you how the farmers of his State are meeting the defense challenge.

COMBRINK:

If you could be out in our counties these days, watching the doors of the Ever Normal Granary open to hog, dairy and poultry feeders, you could see the answer. Up until the time the farmers in Illinois started turning the corn reserve into food, we had nearly 100 million bushels under seal on farms, in steel bins, and in warehouses. Now, the hog feeders, the poultrymen, and the dairymen working for the defense of democracy are taking the feed out of storage. We weren't kidding when we said the Triple-A program provided for an Ever Normal Granary which could be used in time of need.

KADDERLY:

While Corn Belt farmers are converting stored corn to meat, Idaho produces meat with a different feed ... But that's the story of L. B. Taylor.

TAYLOR:

Idaho along with the rest of the potato States found out last spring that we had more potatoes than the country could possibly eat. With the aid of the Department of Agriculture's potato diversion program, we moved almost 6000 carlots out of regular trade channels into feed for livestock. And while cattle and sheep are on the range, producers are making their spuds into silage or dehydrating them, so they'll be on hand to feed next fall. Potatoes which otherwise would have gone to waste are being converted into meat and livestock products to feed our nation and the people of other democracies.

KADDERLY:

Next an Eastern farmer ... Julian Thayer reports that Connecticut farmers are meeting the defense challenge by:

THAYER:

Producing more dairy, poultry, and vegetable products to meet the needs of workers in defense industries and the men in army camps.

Meeting a 30 percent decrease in farm labor by enrolling school boys and making more efficient use of farm machinery.

(over)

THAYER--continued:

Maintaining soil fertility through the use of lime and superphosphate.

Getting more of our living off our own farms, thus releasing more food for the democracies.

Obtaining a better understanding of democracy through discussion.

KADDERLY:

Down the Atlantic seaboard several hundred miles, North Carolina farmers are meeting some of the same and some different problems. G. T. Scott reports.

SCOTT:

Four large military defense building programs in North Carolina have, of necessity, caused a mild shortage of farm labor in central and eastern sections of our State. Some farmers have had to abandon their homes to make room for the army camps. But North Carolina farmers are going ahead -- growing vegetables, furnishing meat, butter, and eggs for the soldiers. At least 150,000 Tar Heel farmers are taking part in the emergency food-feed program, all producing at least 75 percent of the food and feed needed on the farm.

KADDERLY:

This certainly is the time for quick adjustments -- no less in North Carolina than in Mississippi, from which we hear next. C. L. Neill of Mississippi.

NEILL:

Traditionally, Mississippi is a cotton producing State. But this year our farmers have increased the acreage of food and feed crops to help safeguard the health of our people and the Nation. Compared with 1940, we are planting 20 percent more land to small grain crops such as oats; 10 percent more acres in sweetpotatoes; 15 percent more soybeans; 11 percent more tame hay; 3 percent more cowpeas; a large increase in tomatoes; and we have more home gardens and better pastures than ever before.

KADDERLY:

Next a report by R. J. McKenna on what Montana farmers and ranchers are contributing toward the strength of the nation.

McKENNA:

Beef from Montana grasslands; wool and mutton from the sheep ranges; and wheat from the rolling plains ... these are the major contributions of Montana agriculture to the Nation's food for defense needs.

In the irrigated valleys, we're increasing the production of peas and beans.

The country can count on us because we have been reconditioning the range, conserving soil and water; and because we are handling wheat supplies as a food reserve ... as an asset instead of a liability to farm income.

KADDERLY:

Speaking of wheat, Pennsylvania reports another way to meet the country's requirements. We'll hear from James Walker.

WALKER:

Many Pennsylvania farmers are using their growing wheat for pasture and roughage. That's because our pastures and hay crops have suffered from a shortage of rain, and because we have somewhat more land in wheat than we want with marketing quotas in effect. This use of wheat will help us maintain or even increase our dairy production in spite of the drought. As another change, Pennsylvania farmers have increased their tomato acreage by about 5 thousand acres. We've been operating on a steady, stable basis for many years, not making many changes. But recent experience has proven that we are able to meet new conditions as they develop.

KADDERLY:

Indiana farmers are also in a position to make changes fast. Marshall Vogler reports for that State.

VOGLER:

More Indiana farmers are united under the common banner of the National Farm Program this year than ever before. We can and will do what is necessary for the defense of democracy. Those farmers who last year made Indiana first in tomato production, third in hog production, and one of the top poultry and dairy States, have already answered the call for more of these foods. They are feeding hogs to heavier weights; they have already over-subscribed the requested increase in poultry and egg production; canners and producers of tomatoes are stepping up production 30 percent. So long as our Triple-A program provides us the machinery for united effort, we can provide the results.

KADDERLY:

Next a report by Sidney J. Nebeker of Utah, who says more than 82 percent of the farmers in his State are taking part in the farm program.

NEBEKER:

Yes sir ... Utah farmers and ranchers realize they have a real job in producing food. And they haven't forgotten that food comes from the soil. With only about 3 acres of cropland for each person in the State, we know we have to look after the soil. With the help of the program, Utah farmers applied more than 22 hundred tons of treble superphosphate this spring. They're doing all they can to meet our food needs now. ... AND they're also preparing to produce more food as time goes on.

KADDERLY:

It's a long way from Utah to South Carolina, but the two States are meeting a similar problem. C. W. Stone reports for South Carolina.

ADAMS:

We, in South Carolina, believe that the first line of home defense and national defense is the production of the food needed on the farm. The Triple-A Committeemen recently made a survey of 130,000 farm families. They found these farm families were not producing enough food for their own needs.

The Extension Service has organized and is guiding 3700 farm leaders who are personally urging and assisting farm families to produce a sufficient amount of food for home use. They are showing farmers how they can use the farm program to this end. Already 35,000 families have pledged themselves to produce their home food requirements.

KADDERLY:

Better nutrition and better health for people on the farms as well as for people in towns and cities ... that's an important goal. Concerning food supplies for the cities, here's a report by Shaun Kelly of Massachusetts.

SHAUN KELLY:

The dairy farms of Massachusetts are producing 5 percent more milk than the 10-year average and the most since May, 1927. Poultrymen are maintaining the production of eggs and broilers at the highest point in several years. Indications are that they'll continue to do so during the present season. The scarcity of farm labor probably will limit increases in the kinds of production that require an increased supply of labor, but we will maintain those increases which can be maintained by heavier feeding of poultry and livestock.

KADDERLY:

Next we call on Chris Kainrad, representing the State of Ohio.

KAINRAD:

Here's one example of how Ohio is meeting the defense challenge: A canning factory at Toledo has re-opened after being closed two years. It has contracted enough acres of tomatoes to put the plant on a full-production basis.

Farmers around every tomato cannery have increased their tomato acreage as much as the canneries can handle.

And here's another thing: Many Ohio farmers are turning hogs on good legume pasture which ordinarily would have been cut for hay. They're doing this to produce more pork. And listen to this: hatcheries in Ohio this year have received orders for 15 percent more baby chicks than last year.

KADDERLY:

If you're watching the map as you hear these reports, look now to the Southwest. We hear from New Mexico ... represented by C. V. Hemphill.

HEMPHILL:

In New Mexico we're doing two jobs at once -- producing the products America needs, and preventing surplus products from causing trouble.

The range lands we have improved with conservation practices are supporting over 1-1/4 million head of cattle and 2-1/3 million head of sheep ... a great potential supply of beef and mutton.

Half the cotton producers are taking part in the supplementary cotton program and putting 2,000 acres less land in cotton.

As for wheat, we have about 80 percent of the wheat acres in compliance with the farm program. And where there is any wheat in New Mexico, I find the farmers planning to store it in farm granaries as a reserve.

KADDERLY:

The New Mexico aim of adjustments to meet market demands has a parallel in Delaware, as C. E. Ocheltree points out.

OCHELTREE:

Yes, and the favorable response of Delaware farmers to the needs of adjustment is emphasized by the recent wheat referendum. More than 90 percent of the votes favored marketing quotas. Ninety-five percent of the wheat growers in Delaware with some 70,000 acres, had planted within their acreage allotments. While guarding against surplus trouble in wheat, we are increasing our acreage of tomatoes, sweet corn and string beans. In 1940 Delaware farmers conserved and built their soil reserves to the extent that they earned 90 percent of soil building allowance. To sum up, they are building their soil for future needs and adjusting their acreages of various crops to help meet the requirements of the nation.

KADDERLY:

To be able to adjust their farming operations efficiently, farmers must be well-informed. Charles W. Stickney emphasizes this in his report on Minnesota.

STICKNEY:

The State, County, and Community Triple-A committeemen in Minnesota are doing their very best to see that every farmer in the State is informed on the need for adjusting farming operations. This is a part of the program for producing the extra pork, dairy and poultry products, and canning crops requested by Secretary Wickard. The committeemen are getting the information to other farmers in local meetings, newspaper articles, radio programs and by personal contact. Minnesota farmers are turning our large supplies of feed grain into food for this country and the friends of democracy abroad.

KADDERLY:

For all the hustle and bustle of preparedness now, there's still room for serious thought about the kind of a country we want when the war is over. And Charles T. Cameron says Oklahoma farmers are thinking about that.

CAMERON:

One reason we're thinking about the post-war conditions is that the last World War had a devastating effect on Oklahoma soil. Much of the land that was broken out of sod eroded badly. In recent years Oklahoma farmers have seeded more than 280 thousand acres back to grass. And with committees in 77 counties, they are studying wise land use. Today we feel well prepared to meet the challenge of national defense. And we still look toward the future. When this war is over, we hope to still be prepared.

KADDERLY:

And that's another statement that will be echoed from every part of the land.

The reports we have just heard have emphasized the fact that Farming to Meet the Defense Challenge is a job of making adjustments -- adjustments to provide the foods required for better nutrition and better health of all the people on the farms and in the towns and cities of America ... to provide the foods required by the democracies abroad... adjustments to forestall trouble from the crops already stored in abundance ... adjustments for preparedness, now, and later.

Tomorrow, we complete our roll-call of the States. We'll have with us another groups of farmer-committeemen who are representing their States at a conference to prepare the 1942 Triple-A program. They'll tell you how the farmers in their States are Farming to Meet the Defense Challenge.

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The first part of the report is devoted to a general description of the project and its objectives. It is followed by a detailed account of the work done during the period covered by the report. The results of the work are then presented, and a conclusion is drawn from the findings. The report is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the project and its progress.

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